

At a Williston home undergoing an energy efficiency retrofit, Rep. Peter Welch on Monday highlighted how his Home Star bill will create jobs and save homeowners money.

Welch joined Brian Bergeron – an efficiency contractor for the Williston-based company, Building Energy – on a tour of a house that is projected to cut 30 percent of its energy use after a three-day retrofit. Under Welch's Home Star program, the Williston homeowners, Lynn Goyette and Eileen Blackwood, could qualify for a rebate of \$6,000 for their retrofit.

"If Home Star passes, the work you're seeing here today will be replicated in millions of homes across the country and put to work 168,000 people," Welch told a group of contractors, retailers and efficiency experts. "Home Star will provide jobs to those hardest hit by the housing bust: builders and contractors, hardware store owners and manufacturers of construction material. At the same time, it will provide an incentive for homeowners like Lynn and Eileen to cut their energy bills and reduce their contribution to climate change."

The Williston tour came just days before Welch will formally introduce his Home Star legislation, which is based on a Retrofit for Energy and Environmental Performance program (H.R. 1778) he wrote and the House passed last year. The House Committee on Energy and Commerce, of which Welch is a member, is scheduled to hold a hearing on Welch's Home Star bill this Thursday.

Home Star would provide two forms of incentives to families who invest in making their homes more efficient. The first is a point-of-sale rebate for up to 50 percent of the cost of certain energy efficiency improvements up to \$3,000 per home — including insulation, HVAC units, duct sealing and water heaters. The second is a more comprehensive retrofit that rewards homeowners for the total amount of energy they save.

Also taking part in the event were several Vermont stakeholders who argued that Home Star would create jobs in their respective fields while further solidifying Vermont's role as the leader in energy efficiency innovation. St. Johnsbury businessman Tom Allen said that Home Star would create demand for products sold at Allen Lumber Co., of which he is vice president. Tim Frost, president of South Burlington-based Peregrine Design & Build and a member of the Vermont Home Builders, said it would create jobs for many out-of-work builders. Mike Rogers, senior vice president of GreenHomes America, and Jim Grevatt, director of residential services for Efficiency Vermont, also took part in the event.

[Click here](#) for pictures of the Williston event.